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THREE NEW BIRDS FROM WEST AFRICA

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The new subspecies described below were encountered during the study of a collection of birds from Gabon, to be reported on elsewhere. For the loan of comparative material we are indebted to the authorities of the following institutions: Dean Amadon and Charles Vaurie, American Museum of Natural History; Kenneth Parkes, Carnegie Museum; James Greenway, Museum of Comparative Zoology.

Polipicus elliotii

Recently, *Polipicus johnstoni* of Mount Cameroon, with its races *schultzei* of Fernando Po and *kupeensis* of Mount Kupe, has been united with *P. elliotii* by Serle (Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, **72**, 1952, p. 105), and in this action he is quite correct. *Polipicus elliotii* (sens. str.) has been considered monotypic, ranging from the Cameroon lowlands south to northern Angola and the Kasai, and east to the Ituri and Uganda. However, within *P. elliotii* there is a great deal of geographic variation, and at least one race must be separated.

Birds from the Cameroon agree most closely with Cassin's original description (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci., 1863, p. 197). The type came from the Muni River, now the boundary between Spanish Guinea and Gabon. The diagnostic characters of the Cameroon population are the golden wash over much of the greenish upper parts, particularly the inner secondaries, coverts and scapulars; the heavy streaking below, extending onto the abdomen; and the dark yellow-olive wash over the breast and abdomen, the wash being darkest on the breast.

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Cassin particularly mentions the golden wash on the inner secondaries and the yellowish wash below being heaviest on the breast.

Gabon and Kasai specimens agree with Cameroon birds in the coloration and heavy streaking of the under parts but have the upper parts a clear yellow-green, with only a suggestion of golden wash on the secondaries and coverts.

East Congo–Uganda birds agree well with Gabon–Kasai specimens in the coloration of the upper parts and the width and extent of the ventral streaking. However, they lack the strong yellow-olive wash below that characterizes that population and the Cameroon specimens, having the ground color of the under parts a uniform pale yellow-green.

Angola specimens are at the opposite extreme from those of Cameroon, being the purest green above and having a pale yellow wash below, with the ventral streaking much reduced. The streaking on the breast is much narrower, and on the abdomen it is almost obsolete. This population is sufficiently distinct to be separated as:

Polipicus elliotii gabela, new subspecies

Type.—Chicago Natural History Museum no. 224538, from 15 km. south of Gabela, Angola. Adult male, collected August 15, 1954, by Gerd Heinrich.

Diagnosis.—Compared to nominate *P. e. elliotii* of southern Cameroon, *gabela* has the upper parts a much clearer green, with very little golden wash; the dark streaking of the under parts is much reduced, being almost wanting on the abdomen; and the ground color of the under parts is pale yellowish, instead of yellow olive. *P. e. gabela* most nearly resembles *kupeensis* of British Cameroons, from which it is distinguished by the more buffy, less olive, ear coverts and sides of head, and the more whitish, less yellowish throat. There appears to be no significant variation in size within the mainland populations of the species.

Range.—Northwestern Angola.

Remarks.—The populations retained in *elliotii* are not uniform, but further division is not practicable. The Gabon and Congo populations resemble *gabela* in having more greenish upper parts, and upper Congo birds lack the strong olive wash below. All, however, are strongly streaked on the under parts and in this respect are readily separable from *gabela*.

The close resemblance between *gabela* and *kupeensis* is remarkable in view of their wide geographic separation; *kupeensis* is intermediate between the practically unstreaked *johnstoni* of Cameroon highlands and the heavily streaked *elliotii* of lowland Cameroons, and it was the discovery of this form that led Serle to unite the two species. The presence of a similar form at the opposite end of the range of *elliotii* strengthens this view.

The ranges and diagnostic characters of the recognizable races of *elliotii* are listed below:

schultzei.—Highlands of Fernando Po; smaller than *johnstoni* (not seen). Wing 85 mm. (Reichenow).

johnstoni.—Highlands of eastern Nigeria and British Cameroons (except Mount Kupe); greenish above, clear yellowish below, virtually unstreaked. Wing, 4 ♂, 91–93; 4 ♀, 86–91 mm.

kupeensis.—Mount Kupe, British Cameroons; like *johnstoni*, but moderately streaked below. Wing, 1 ♂, 92 mm.

elliotii.—Lowlands of British Cameroons east through southern Cameroon and the upper Congo to Uganda, and south through Gabon to the Kasai; always heavily streaked below, upper parts varying from golden green to green, lower parts from olive yellow to pale dull greenish-yellow. Wing, 13 ♂, 88–97 (av. 94.0); 10 ♀, 90–95 (av. 92.6 mm.).

gabela.—Northwestern Angola; green above and pale yellow below, only moderately streaked. Wing, 2 ♂, 93, 93; 1 ♀, 94 mm.

Specimens examined.—johnstoni: Cameroon Mountain, 4 ♂, 4 ♀. *kupeensis:* Mount Kupe, 1 ♂. *elliotii:* southern Cameroons, 9 ♂, 6 ♀; Gabon, M'Bigou, 1 ♀; Belgian Congo, Kasai, 1 ♂, Ituri, 2 ♂, 1 ♀, Rugege Forest, southeast of Lake Kivu, 1 ♂; Uganda, 2 ♀. *gabela:* Angola, Gabela, 1 ♂ (type), 2 ♀, Canzele, 30 km. west of Camabatela, 1 ♂.

Nectarinia superba

This species ranges throughout the Upper and Lower Guinea forests from Sierra Leone to Uganda and south to northern Angola. There is a cline of decreasing size from Uganda (wing of males 77–81) to Upper Guinea (wing of males 67–74), and a secondary north-south cline, Angola birds being almost as large as those from Uganda (wing of males 76–80). Variation in color, however, is not clinal. Uganda birds (*buvoma*) have the most extensive iridescent caps; those from Upper Guinea (*ashantiensis*) the least. Gabon and Angolan birds (*superba*) and those from Upper Guinea have the dullest red under parts, while those from Nigeria and Cameroon have the brightest. There is no name available for this brightly colored population, so we propose to name it:

Nectarinia superba nigeriae, new subspecies

Type.—Chicago Natural History Museum no. 95910, from Ifon, Province of Ondo, Nigeria. Adult male collected by Rudyerd and Laura Boulton, August 10, 1934.

Diagnosis.—Male distinguished from all other races in being brighter, clearer red on the under parts. Iridescent cap as in nominate *superba,* of Lower Guinea; more extensive than in *ashantiensis* of Upper Guinea. Size intermediate between *superba* and the smaller *ashantiensis,* but nearer the former. Female not seen.

Measurements.—Type: wing 74, culmen from base 36. Five males: wing 72–76 (74.0); culmen 32–36 (34.5).

Range.—Southern Nigeria, intergrading through southern Cameroon with *superba.*

Remarks.—This new race is more closely allied to *superba* than to *ashantiensis.* The population of southern Cameroon is extremely variable. The under parts of individuals from the same localities vary from almost as bright as *nigeriae* to as dark as typical *superba* from Gabon and Angola. Populations from the last two localities are quite constantly dark dull red below. In the color of the under parts the males of *buvoma* from Uganda are intermediate between *nigeriae* and *superba.*

Measurements of adult males of the various populations examined are:

	Number of specimens	Wing	Culmen from base
ashantiensis			
Liberia	(2)	67, 70	31, 32
nigeriae			
Nigeria	(5)	72–76 (74.0)	32–36 (34.5)
(intermediate)			
Cameroon	(34)	73–79 (75.5)	33–39 (36.1)
superba			
Gabon	(5)	73–77 (75.2)	35–38 (36.4)
Angola	(10)	76–80 (77.4)	34–38 (36.0)
buvoma			
Uganda	(11)	77–81 (78.5)	32.5–38.5 (35.6)

Serinus capistratus

In the Heinrich collection of Angolan birds in Chicago Natural History Museum there is a fine series of four males, three females,

and five immature *Serinus capistratus* from the evergreen forests of Mount Soque and Mount Moco. When compared to males from adjoining regions in Angola, and from Gabon and the Kasai, the males are a much duller yellow on the under parts, and must be separated as:

Serinus capistratus hildegardae, new subspecies

Type.—Chicago Natural History Museum no. 225994, from Mount Soque, 42 km. west-southwest of Luimbale, Huambo, Angola. Adult male, collected by G. Heinrich, August 28, 1954.

Diagnosis.—Males: similar to *capistratus*, but forehead, superciliaries and under parts duller, slightly olive yellow, rather than clear yellow. Females: darker, more olive yellow on the under parts, and as a consequence the dark streaking on the breast less conspicuous. Average somewhat larger than *capistratus*.

Measurements.—Wing: 4 males 65, 66, 70, 70; 3 females 65, 66, 67 mm.

Range.—Apparently confined to the evergreen forests on Mount Soque and Mount Moco, Huambo, Angola.

Specimens examined.—capistratus: Gabon, 3 ♂, 1 ♀; Angola, Canzele, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Golungo Alto, 2 ♂ (one AMNH), Chitau, 1 ♂ (CM), Pungo Andongo, 1 ♂, 2 ♀ (AMNH), Canhoca, 1 ♂ (AMNH), Talamunjamba, 1 ♂ (AMNH). *hildegardae:* Mount Moco, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; Mount Soque, 3 ♂, 2 ♀, 2 im. ♂, 3 im. ♀.

Remarks.—Males of *capistratus* from northern Angola, Gabon and the Kasai are consistent in being a clear golden yellow on the under parts, and *hildegardae* is evidently confined to the mountain forests of Huambo. Wing measurements for *capistratus:* 11 males 61–67 (63.3); 4 females 61, 64, 64, 65. While not great the size difference is consistent.

There are five immature birds from Mount Soque, two of them beginning their molt into adult plumage. The immatures are patterned like the females, but are washed with dull olive green below. Even in this plumage the males are somewhat brighter than the females, though with just as much striping on the breast.

This subspecies is named in honor of Mrs. Gerd (Hildegard) Heinrich, who accompanied her husband in Angola and took an active part in the work of the trip.